



## *IDPH News Release*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
December 15, 2014

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# **Iowa Hospitals, EMS, and Lab Partner as Ebola Response Precaution**

***No cases of Ebola have been identified in Iowa; IDPH  
stresses the likelihood of an Ebola case in Iowa is extremely  
low***

The Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) today announced it is collaborating with the Iowa State Hygienic Lab (SHL), three EMS providers and three Iowa hospitals for testing, screening, or treatment of an Ebola patient, if required. Iowa does not have any cases of Ebola, nor has it had any cases of Ebola in the past. IDPH stresses the likelihood of an Ebola case in Iowa is extremely low; however, the designation of partner hospitals, EMS providers and the ability to test for the Ebola virus in-state is another step in the extensive and continuing preparedness efforts on the state, county and local levels.

University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics in Iowa City has agreed to serve as an Ebola treatment facility. Mercy Medical Center – Des Moines and UnityPoint Health – Iowa Methodist Medical Center, Des Moines have agreed to be screening facilities for an Ebola patient. EMS providers who have agreed to be designated as transporters are Area Ambulance, Cedar Rapids; Medic EMS, Davenport; and Iowa EMS Alliance (West DSM EMS), West Des Moines. In addition, the State Hygienic Lab has been certified by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to test for Ebola, if such a test is requested by IDPH.

There are many other Iowa hospitals and providers who have indicated willingness to serve if called upon. “I am proud of these partners for stepping up to the challenge to ensure that Iowa is prepared,” said IDPH Director Gerd Clabaugh. “Iowans should be confident that while the chance of a confirmed or suspected Ebola case in Iowa is highly unlikely, the public health and state health care systems are prepared for that possibility.”

The federal government is working closely with states, and states in turn with local public health agencies, to track travelers returning from Ebola-affected West African countries. All of these travelers are routed to one of five screening airports.

- Well travelers are allowed to go on to their final destination.
- The CDC then notifies the receiving state of that traveler’s final destination.
- If, for instance, the final destination is Iowa, IDPH contacts local public health officials to conduct a risk assessment of the individual and issue appropriate health orders.
- Local public health officials notify key partners that an order exists in the service area; however, no details regarding the types of orders, numbers, or patient identifiers are given. This is required by Iowa law that prohibits potential identification of an individual.

Public health orders are based on a risk assessment (low, some, or high).

- Low Risk – individual is ordered to take their temperature and notify local public health of the results twice daily. The individual is allowed to go about normal activities.
- Some Risk – individual is ordered to home quarantine; this allows for outdoor non-congregate activities and requires the individual to take their temperature twice daily with local public health observing.
- High Risk – individual is ordered to home quarantine, additional activity is limited and the individual must take their temperature twice daily with local public health observing.

These orders are issued to ensure an early as possible warning of the appearance of symptoms which allows time to arrange for appropriate transport and care of patients to one of the facilities listed above. If an individual under health orders were to develop symptoms of Ebola, IDPH would be notified and IDPH would coordinate transportation with a pre-identified EMS to a designated screening facility. This will ensure that no exposure to unprotected and unprepared healthcare workers occurs.

For more information on Ebola, visit [www.idph.state.ia.us/EHI/Issue.aspx?issue=Ebola](http://www.idph.state.ia.us/EHI/Issue.aspx?issue=Ebola) [www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/index.html).

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